

# Brimrod Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105764
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	324264
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Julie Price Grimshaw

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	236
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S Money Penny
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L Walsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Holborn Street Rochdale Lancashire OL11 4NB

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	324264

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Brimrod is an average size school serving an area that includes pockets of significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is almost four times the national average. Almost all of these pupils speak English as an additional language and a significant proportion are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation stage consists of Nursery and Reception classes, with the Year 1 class being taught in the same unit. The school has received the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were all in temporary posts, having been appointed to these posts in January 2009. The school has appointed a new headteacher who is due to take up post in September 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Brimrod is an outstanding school where the quality of care, guidance and support is exceptional. It is an extremely welcoming and friendly place where everyone, including parents, pupils and visitors, are quickly made to feel at ease. Each individual child is known well and staff do all they can to ensure that every pupil achieves to the best of his or her ability. Parents recognise this. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, a typical view being expressed in the comment, 'The school is focused on ensuring that every child fulfils their potential no matter their background or ability when they start school.'

Excellent teaching and learning and an outstanding curriculum lead to pupils making outstanding progress from starting points that are mostly exceptionally low. Although the trend in standards has fluctuated a little over recent years, current standards in the school are broadly average. An outstanding feature of the school's work is the very high quality support given to pupils for whom English is an additional language. This ensures that their speaking and listening skills are very well developed, and supports their learning very well across all areas of the curriculum.

Pupils take great enjoyment in coming to school and are proud to be at Brimrod. They clearly appreciate the care and support they receive from all staff. One pupil, when discussing a history topic on the Victorian era, said that she prefers life in the modern era as she, 'would hate to miss out on the quality of education we have here – it wasn't as good as this in Victorian times'. Pupils are friendly, polite and behave extremely well. They have an acute awareness of how to stay safe, including safe practices when using the internet. Their knowledge of a range of faiths and cultures is particularly impressive.

Teachers and support staff work together very effectively to make sure that learning is fun and exciting. Work is planned carefully to successfully meet the needs of all pupils. High quality marking encourages pupils and points out precisely what they need to do to improve further. Support from bilingual staff across the school is excellent and is a key factor in the rapid language development of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The rich and varied curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.

The acting headteacher has successfully led the strong team of staff in building on improvements made since the previous inspection. Data are used very effectively to set challenging targets and the progress of each individual pupil is tracked closely. Equality of opportunity is considered to be of paramount importance and all necessary adjustments are made to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have full access to everything the school has to offer. The school has recently taken part in an extremely successful project on community cohesion with a neighbouring school, which has had a clear impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding of ethnicity and faith groups. Although leaders gather a great deal of information on the quality of the school's work, this is not always drawn together effectively to produce succinct and sharply focused self-evaluation. However, the school has taken effective steps to improve since the last inspection and staff have a secure understanding of plans for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Many children join the Nursery with skills that are exceptionally low in comparison to typical age-related expectations. Their language and communication skills are often particularly weak.

The Early Years Foundation Stage staff, including bilingual support staff, work quickly and efficiently to identify each child's starting points. They then ensure that support is tailored to meet the needs of all, with particular attention being paid to the development of speaking and listening skills. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1, most children are confident in their use of language. Children's social development is outstanding. They are imaginative and creative, learning to play happily together and to take turns. The spacious and attractive environment, both indoors and outdoors, supports children's learning very effectively. Adults know when it is appropriate to intervene to ensure that children get the maximum benefit from each activity. Children's welfare is promoted particularly well. Staff are friendly, supportive and caring, and form effective partnerships with parents from a very early stage. Management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding: the acting deputy headteacher monitors every aspect of the unit's work very well and all staff are involved in planning and evaluating the children's learning. By the end of the Reception, standards for most pupils are below average, with some reaching standards close to average. This represents outstanding achievement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that information collected from monitoring all aspects of the school's work is used effectively to produce succinct and sharply focused self-evaluation and high quality improvement planning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

The results of tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6 have fluctuated slightly over the past three years according to the ability levels of individual classes. However, standards have generally been below average. This represents outstanding achievement for the great majority of pupils, who start school with very limited skills, particularly in language. The school's concerted efforts to address weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection are now paying off, with improvements in pupils' speaking and listening skills leading to higher standards in writing. The school's data, combined with inspection evidence, indicates that standards are currently just below average. Achievement in science is a particular strength. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress as a result of the carefully tailored personalised support they receive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's strong emphasis on physical education ensures that pupils take regular exercise and know all about the benefits of this, as reflected in the comment made by one pupil that, 'exercise refreshes the mind as well as the body.' They also know all about the importance of diet and which foods contain important nutrients. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds get on very well together and have respect for each other's beliefs. All pupils are keen to play an active role in the school community, for example, through the school council or by being playground buddies who, in the words of one pupil, 'solve problems and are helpful to everyone'. Attendance, judged to be inadequate at the last inspection, has improved greatly as a result of the school's successful strategies and is now in line with the national average. Pupils excellent social and team working skills, combined with sound numeracy, literacy and computer skills, mean that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

The quality of teaching is consistently at least good with much outstanding practice. Excellent relationships are evident in every classroom at Brimrod and staff promote a positive atmosphere in all lessons. Teachers use a wide variety of strategies to support learning according to pupils' individual needs. Of particular note is the use of praise to enthuse and motivate pupils, and much assessment practice is of exemplary quality. Teachers and support staff have very high expectations of pupils, reflected in the language used in lessons and in the attractive classroom displays that support learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They are confident, hard working and very keen to ask questions.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum provides an excellent range of learning opportunities for all pupils. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of subjects, and information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning. Themed work links subjects together very effectively, with pupils and staff alike commenting that this approach makes learning fun and interesting. Physical education, and in particular outdoor pursuits, is a key strength of the curriculum. The extremely successful 'forest school' project has resulted in pupils developing excellent personal and social skills as they learn about the environment. Pupils benefit from very high quality music tuition provided by visiting staff. There is excellent provision for modern languages: pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their lively and exciting Spanish lessons, with several proudly announcing that they can now speak three or even four languages.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

Each individual child is valued and staff work exceptionally well with a range of external agencies to ensure that all pupils receive the support they need to flourish. All safeguarding requirements are met and pupils confirm that adults are always there to provide help and support should they need it. Academic guidance is very effective. All staff are proficient in using data to set challenging targets for pupils, who, as a result, know exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Competent teaching assistants provide specialist support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works very well with parents, for example, by providing regular sessions focusing on how parents can best support their children's learning at home.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

The acting headteacher has led and managed the school very well since taking up post two terms ago. Her strong commitment and dedication are shared by all other leaders across the school and the whole staff work very well together as a team. Leaders and managers at all levels have ensured that improvements made since the last inspection have been sustained and that strengths in the school's work have been built upon and extended. The school's excellent work

on community cohesion has resulted in comments from pupils such as, 'We are getting better at making friends with everyone.' and 'We are learning to be peacemakers.' Governors know the school well and work to provide support and challenge to school leaders. A thorough system of monitoring, linked to school priorities and the performance management of staff, generates a great deal of evaluative information on the quality of the school's work. As a result school leaders have a secure awareness of the school's main strengths and weaknesses. However, this information is not always analysed effectively enough to produce concise self-evaluation, which can then lead to sharply focused improvement planning. Nevertheless, the school provides excellent value for money and has good capacity for further improvement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, I visited your school recently together with another inspector so that we could find out how well you are doing. I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us. I would also like to share our main findings with you.

You told us that you think your school is 'excellent' and we agree. You attend an outstanding school, where all the staff are committed to helping you achieve as well as possible. You told us that you love the kayaking, skiing and climbing, and we were delighted to hear that you were gaining so much from your project on community cohesion. The 'forest school' looks like great fun too! Your teachers and the support staff work hard to make lessons lively and interesting, and we were pleased that you all knew your targets and exactly what you need to do to improve your work. From the Nursery through to Year 6, you make outstanding progress, especially in your language development.

We were so impressed with your excellent behaviour and the fact that you look after each other so well. We would also like to congratulate you on your attendance, which has improved so much since the school was last inspected. Be sure to keep this up and attend school regularly, so that the attendance figures continue to climb!

Your headteacher and the other staff who manage your school have worked very hard to make sure that many things have improved over the past few years. They keep a close watch on everything that is happening in your school and this means they have a lot of information that tells them how well you and your school are doing. I have asked that they draw all this information together and use it as well as possible, so that your school continues to improve.

I am delighted that you are proud to be pupils at Brimrod and wish you well in the future.